Deputy Under G/PM TS AUTH DECLASSIFIED RELEASE DEAT

TOP SECRET

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: The Military Significance on Share Soviet Missile Bases in Cuba

- 1. The presence of 24 1,020 n.m. MRBM launchers and 12 or 15 2.200 n.m. IRBM launchers in Cuba provides a significant accretion to Soviet strategic capabilities for striking the continental United States. In view of the relatively limited numbers of Soviet operational ICBM launchers -- at present an estimated 75 -- the missiles in the Caribbean will increase the first-strike missile salvo which the Wook could place on targets in the continental United States by over 40 percent.
- 2. At present, 20 of the 24 MRBM launchers are believed to be fully operational, and the remaining four will be within a few days. The first 4 IREM launchers will probably reach an emergincy capability on November 15, and full operational status on December 1. The 8 other confirmed IRBM launchers will probably reach emergency capability by December 1, and be fully operational by December 15. An additional four IRBM launchers will probably be completed, but it is cossible that the quarantine has stopped them. The current threat is thus 24 MRBMs; by December it will-unless construction is effectively stopped within a month-be augmented by at least 12 and up to 16 IRBMs. Each launcher is assumed to have the standard two missiles, allowing one relaid (for refire in 4-6 hours). In at least one of the nine bases more missiles than launchers have been positively confirmed, and in general the number of identified MRBM missiles at least is sufficient to man all the launchers for an initial strike. Earth-covered bunkers suitable for storage or checkout of nuclear weapons are under rapid construction, and at least two of them now appear to be complete. There is one such bunker for each pair of launch sitas.
- 3. The strategic significance of the Suban missile complex is due and only to the substantial quantitative increase in megatoms deliverable in a surprise first strike, but also by their effect on the US deterrent striking force. Approximately 40 percent of the SAC bomber force is now located on air bases within range of Soviet MRE: in Orbs, and almost all of it is in range of the IRBNs. If the present base complex in Subs is completed late in 1962 and taking into account the estimated Soviet ISBN farce for the end of 1982, a Soviet at ack without wagming could deskroy an appreciably larger proportion of over-all United States strategic capability than it could if the Guben complex were not included.

The number of US <u>weapons</u> surviving and ready to retaliate on targets in the USSR would be decreased by about 30 percent, and would thus leave only about 15 percent of the number in our pre-attack force. This force could still cause considerable destruction in a US retaliatory strike, the Soviets could not rely on the degree of surprise assumed in the above calculation, and it is very unlikely that the Soviets would be tempted toward resort to war by the change in the military balance. Nonetheless, this represents a serious dilution of US strategic deterrent capability.

- 4. The reasons for the strategic significance of the Cuban bases are: (a) the size of the Soviet ICBM force does not allow coverage of SAC bomber bases and soft ICBM sites; the addition of the MRBM/IRBM force already on the island of Cuba does permit coverage of all such points, thus bringing under fire an additional 26 US ICBMs and over 100 B-47's; (b) the Cuban based missile systems have high reliability (80 percent), accuracy (1 to 1.5 n.m. CEP), and warhead yield (up to 3 megatons each for the MRBMs, and up to 5 magatons for the IRBMs); (c) the "lited States does not have BMEMs or other early warning radar on the southern approaches; and (d) as taken into account earlier, many SAC bomber bases are concentrated in the South and Midwest.
- 5. All of the discussion above is concerned with the missile complex now being completed in Guba. There is no reason why the Striets could not, if unimpeded by an effective quarantine, literally multiply the number of launchers to a force large enough to threaten the entire strategic balance of power. The Soviets have deployed over 500 MRBMs and IRBMs on their our territory, and the lesser cost compared to 10BMs would make a major expansion in Guba very attractive.

Raymoni L. Garthoff Special Assistant for Soviet Bloc, Office of Politics-Military Affairs

DRAFT FOLLOWS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE DEPUTY UNDERSECRETARY G/mi

CONFIDENT LAL

(TOP SECRET ATTACHMENT)

October 26, 1962

NEMORALIDUM

TO:

G - Mr. U. Alexis Johnson

FROM:

O/FN - Jeffrey C. Kitch

SUBJECT: Military Importance of the Seviet Missile Bases in Cuba

The attached memoranda have been written at my request by Ray Garthoff. One, at the Top Scoret level, sets forth the military significance of the missile bases for the guidance of senior Becartment officers. The second is an unclassified version, in which IO has indicated an active interest for beckground use by USUN, and which may be useful also for USIA, r, and for guidance of senior officers in discussion with outside contacts. The objectives of US diplomary have been taken into account in framing it.

Attachments.

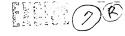
- (1) The Military Significance of the Soviet Missile Bases in Ouba (Top Socret)
- (2) The Military Significance of the Soviet Missile Bases in Suba (Unclassified)

Concurrence: INR - Nr. Hilsman (4)
DOD/ISA - Nr. Rowen *1

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October 26, 1962

MEMORANDUM

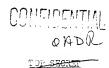
SUBJECT: The Melitary Significance of the Soviet Missile Bases in Guba

1. The presence of 24 1,020 n.m. IRRN launchers and 12 or 16 2,200 n.m. IRRN launchers in Guba provides a significant accretion to Soviet strategic capabilities for striking the continental United States. In the world the relatively limited numbers of Soviet operational ICRN launchers that present an estimated 75 the missiles in the Caribbean will increase the first-strike missile salve which the USAR could place on targets in the continental United States by over 45 tercent.

- 2. At present, 20 of the 24 IRBN launchers are believed to be fully operational, and the remaining four will be within a few days. A functive Chelle confirmed ERN launchers will probably reach emergency capability by December 1, and be fully operational by December 15. An additional four TRSN launchers will probably be completed, but it is possible that the quarantine has stopped them. The current threat is thus 24 IRBNs; in December it will—unless construction is effectively stopped within a month—be augmented by at least 12 and up to 16 ERNs. Each Launcher is assumed to have the standard two missiles, allowing one reload for refire in 4 6 sours). In at least one of the mine bases more missiles than launchers have been positively confirmed, and in pomeral the number of identified NRSN missiles at least is sufficient to run all the launchers for an initial strike. Earth covered bunkers suitable for storage or checkout of nuclear weapons are under rapid construction, and at least two of them now appear to be complete. There is one such bunker for each jair of launch sites.
 - 3. The strategic significance of the Juban missile conclet is due not only to the substantial quantitative increase in negators followerable in a surprise first strike, but also by their effect on the 15 interest striking force. Agreematily all percent of the 540 bother force is now located on air bases within range of Scales (RDMs in Octa, realized almost all of it is in range of the IRSMs. In the present has sometime to the conclet in section of the conclet in section of the contract of the strike in 1002, and their first areases the catinated Scales ICSN force for the end of 1000, a Jourse strategy that the catinate capability than it could if the Suban complex were not include.

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4. The reasons for the strategic significance of the Guban bases are: (a) the size of the Soviet ICBM force does not allow coverage of SAC bomber bases and soft ICBM sites; the adultion of the PREMY RBM force already on the island of Guba goes permit coverage of all such points, thus bringing under fire an additional 26 US ICBMs and over 100 B-47's; (b) the Guban based missile systems have high reliability (30 percent), accuracy (1 to 1.5 n.m. CAP), and warnead yield (up to 3 megatons each for the PREMS, and up to 5 megatons for the PREMS); (c) the United States does not have STEMS or other early warning radar on the scuthern approaches; and (d) as taken into account earlier, many SAC bomber bases are concentrated

5. All of the discussion above is concerned with the minsile complex now being completed in Guba. There is no reason why the Soviets could not, if unimpeded by an effective quaranties, literally multiply the number of launchers to a force large enough to threaten the entire strategic balance of power. The Soviets have dealoyed [512][RBMs and HGMs on their own territory, and the lesser cost compared to ICEMs would make a major expansion in Guba very attractive.

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Raymond D. Garthoff Special Assistant for Soviet Bloc, Office of Follition-Willitary Affairs

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Cctober 26, 1962

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Raymond L. Garthoff

Special Assistant for Soviet Bloc,
Office of Politice-Wilitary Affairs

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